AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously presented) An arthroscopic instrument comprising:

a shaft having a sharp distal tip for capturing and retrieving suture within a patient's body;

an articulating mechanism disposed on the shaft and in communication with the sharp distal tip;

a handle extending from the shaft;

a single lever disposed pivotably on the handle and manipulable by a user's thumb, while the handle is held across the palm of the user's hand and the shaft extends distally away from the user's thumb, to toggle in an arc between two opposed positions, the two opposed positions being symmetric with respect to each other relative to a direction transverse to a longitudinal axis of the shaft; and

a rod extending along the shaft and linking the articulating mechanism to the lever, wherein the lever includes a cam mechanism that engages and cooperates with the rod to move the rod longitudinally within the shaft to operate the articulating mechanism.

2. (Original) The arthroscopic instrument of claim 1, wherein the handle is unitary and extends longitudinally from the shaft.

3. (Original) The arthroscopic instrument of claim 2, wherein the handle is adapted to be gripped in a user's palm.

4. (Previously presented) The arthroscopic instrument of claim 1, wherein the lever is disposed on an upper side of the handle and is adapted to be manipulated by a single digit.

5. (Original) The arthroscopic instrument of claim 1, wherein the lever is urged by a spring into one of the two opposed positions.

Claims 6-10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently amended) An arthroscopic instrument comprising:

a shaft having a sharp distal tip for capturing and retrieving suture within a patient's body;

an articulating mechanism disposed on the shaft and in communication with the sharp distal tip;

a multi-member, pliers-like grip, the grip including:

a curved stationary handle extending from the shaft; and

a curved movable lever disposed pivotably and manipulable by a user between two positions; and

a rod extending along the shaft and linking the articulating mechanism to the lever,

wherein the stationary handle and the movable lever have substantially similar but opposite curved shapes and are disposed substantially symmetric relative to a longitudinal axis of the instrument when the stationary handle and the movable lever are in a closed position, and wherein the stationary handle and the movable lever are asymmetrical with respect to the longitudinal axis of the instrument when the stationary handle and the movable lever are in an open position, and wherein the stationary handle and the movable lever are adapted to be gripped by a user's palm without the need for finger or thumb rings.

12. (Original) The arthroscopic instrument of claim 11, wherein the stationary handle is unitary and extends generally in a longitudinal direction from the shaft.

Claims 13-14. (Canceled)

15. (Original) The arthroscopic instrument of claim 11, wherein the stationary handle and the movable lever are urged into a normally open position.

16. (Original) The arthroscopic instrument of claim 15, wherein the stationary handle and the movable lever are urged by a spring into the normally open position.